



Sign up for 'Thinking of Transitioning to Organic?' workshops

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Registration is under way for a workshop series for farmers or food processors interested in transitioning to organic production.

Two workshops are scheduled: one for farmers on Feb. 4, 2016, and one for processors on Feb. 5, 2016. The workshops are sponsored by the WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Dane County Extension and will be held at the DATCP Building, 702 Agricultural Dr., Madison.

Here are the details:

Transitioning to Organic Dairy Workshop – For Farmers *February 4, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.*

Farmers considering transitioning their farming operation to organic are invited to hear about the following topics: Organic Certification Requirements Overview and NRCS Programs for Farmers; Financing/Crop Insurance and Risk Management; Livestock Health and Management; Soils/Cover Crops & Pasture Management; and Markets and Pricing.

Speakers include: Allen Philo, Midwestern BioAg; Harriet Behar, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES); Dr. Guy Jodarski, Organic Valley; and Paul Dietmann, emerging marketing specialist, Badgerland Financial; and Marty Grosse, assistant vice president of Badgerland Financial, who will talk about financing specific to dairy operations.

Who should attend? Dairy farmers and technical assistance providers.

Transitioning to Organic Workshop – For Food Processors *February 5, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.*

Food processors can hear from two certifying agencies about: Is Organic Appropriate for Your Facility or Product?; Standards, Requirements, and Regulations; Market Opportunities; Organic System Plans; Ingredients/Processing Aids, Cleaning Agents, and more.

Speakers Feb. 5 include: Michelle Menken, Minnesota Crop Improvement Association; and Joe Pedretti, Midwest Organic Services Association. The Feb. 5 workshop also includes an afternoon business panel with the following speakers: Michelle Menken, Minnesota Crop Improvement Association; Mark Geistlinger and Erik Gundersen, MOSA; Tony Saarem, Go Macro; Bob Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese and Clock Shadow Creamery; Mike Moon, Just Coffee; and James Baerwolf, Sassy Cow Creamery.

Who should attend? Food processing professionals, business operators, or technical assistance providers interested in organic standards and regulations.

For more information about the Feb 4 workshop, contact Angie Sullivan (DATCP ag program specialist) at 608-224-5095 or Angie.Sullivan@wisconsin.gov. For more information about the Feb. 5 workshop, contact Theresa Feiner (DATCP business development specialist) at 608-224-5140 or Theresa.feiner@wi.gov

Cost to attend is \$20/day or \$30 for both days. Lunch is included. To register, visit:
<http://counties.uwex.edu/dane/?p=6125>